



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1350-2000, **Version:** *

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR

By The Entire Council

Whereas, The Council of the City of New York mourns the death and celebrates the life and good works of John Cardinal O'Connor, the eminent spiritual leader of the New York Archdiocese's 2.37 million Catholics and the most prominent voice of the Catholic Church in the United States; and

Whereas, During his sixteen-year tenure as Archbishop of the 10-county Archdiocese of New York, John Cardinal O'Connor served the people of this city as a leader of good conscience, unwavering faith and quick wit, whose many acts of good will shall determine his legacy in the Catholic Church, in our nation and in our city; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor arrived at St. Patrick's Cathedral by appointment of Pope John Paul II in 1984, and with that gesture, New York was given a gifted clergyman with vast experiences, ranging from his many years as a Navy chaplain, his work with developmentally disabled children and his academic pursuits that included a master's degree in clinical psychology and a doctorate in political science; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor chose to remain a very public figure, especially in his earlier years at the Diocese, holding weekly press conferences until 1990 and taking firm stances on often controversial issues; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor led the New York Archdiocese according to the laws and positions of the Catholic faith, and he promoted these positions with utmost conviction; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor presided at St. Patrick's Cathedral with a clear mission, to serve God and to lead fellow Catholics according to the teachings of the Church while adding a prominent Catholic voice to the everyday public discourse of our city and the world in which we live; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor used his position to advocate on behalf of the working class, having been raised in a religious, working class household in Philadelphia and he was a great friend of the labor movement, recognizing the need to instill fairness and equality in the workplace; and

Whereas, Cardinal O'Connor further directed the mission of the Church to help the poor and homeless, and more than anything else, he used his position to aid and comfort the disadvantaged; and

Whereas, Having served as a Navy chaplain for 27 years, achieving the rank of Rear Admiral and serving as Chief of Navy Chaplains, Cardinal O'Connor was a gentle voice to American soldiers in Korea and Vietnam and yet he often expressed disapproval toward American military actions overseas; and

Whereas, Much like Pope John Paul II, Cardinal O'Connor took a firm stance against anti-Semitism and preached tolerance among the world's religious peoples; and

Whereas, Throughout his sixteen years at the New York Archdiocese, John Cardinal O'Connor matched the pace and vibrancy of New York City, yet he always stayed true to his role as a priest for the people; and

Whereas, The respect and admiration that he continues to evoke from the millions of Catholics and non-Catholics throughout the world, is testament to his legacy as a distinguished leader who stood for faith, hope and humanity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York mourns the death and celebrates the life and good works of John Cardinal O'Connor and adjourns today in his memory.

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